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Security Information

INDONESIAN DETERIORATION

A few weeks ago (19 Nov) I referred to a seriously deteriorating situation in Indonesia.

This deterioration has progressed rather rapidly in the past two or three weeks -- particularly in the Ministry of Defense and in the Armed Forces.

It has now reached the point where a military coup against Prime Minister Ali's government and perhaps civil war in Java has become a real possibility in the immediate future.

This is result of conflict between Pres. Sukarno and Defense Minister Iwa who want
^{on one side}
armed forces loyal to them under leftist

officers and the professional military officers
^{on the other side}
who want to maintain the armed forces loyal only to the state.

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Defense Minister Iwa has been packing the Defense Ministry with pro-Communist officers, replacing moderate professional military men and has tried to remove commanders of "territories" (military districts) and the commander of the D jakarta garrison - who are opposed to his policies.

The opposition commanders control North Sumatra, West Java, Central Java, and Borneo (The commander in East Java supports Iwa)

In West ^{and} Central Java the commanders have been taking steps to protect their positions, redeploying forces and dispersing artillery and heavy equipment to avert seizure.

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At a meeting of territorial commanders on 7 December, the opposition commanders denounced Iwa for forcing Sugeng, the Chief of Staff of the Army, to submit his resignation, threatening not to recognize Sugeng's successor but to establish a new administration independent of Defense Minister Iwa and his appointees.

The Nationalist Party, the largest group supporting Ali's Cabinet, has also denounced Iwa and threatened to withdraw its backing if Iwa does not resign.

Meanwhile, both anti-Iwa military units and Communist-led armed veterans groups are moving into the Djakarta area. The anti-Iwa military units are believed to be resolved to fight rather than surrender the capital to Iwa and pro-Communist groups and military units.

The pro-Iwa commander of forces in East Java may then attack the anti-Iwa forces in Central and West Java, precipitating civil war in Java.

The police - principally the 17,000-man crack Mobile Brigade - will probably support the anti - Iwa opposition. They have resented Communist-inspired interference and attempts to take control of the police organization.